



2019 EPHYTO HIGHLIGHTS

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MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING ESG CHAIR: MR PETER NEIMANIS

2019 has been another noteworthy year of ePhyto achievements.

The official "Go Live" of the Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS) was the main highlight for the ePhyto Steering Group. The GeNS has been several years of effort and will be a great tool, for countries without a national system, to be able to participate in ePhyto exchanges and the benefits that brings - I'd like to thank Ghana, Samoa and Sri Lanka for all their efforts and support in piloting the GeNS. The GeNS is now in production use for Ghana, Samoa and Sri Lanka and it is great to see some new countries, like Jamaica and Papua New Guinea, get on-board and start the testing process.

Another key highlight were the regional ePhyto workshops we held in 2019, these workshops had great participation from country representatives and, since then, more countries have started the on-boarding process for the GeNS.

This is also the end of my three-year term of Chair of the ePhyto Steering Group. I'd like to thank all current and previous ESG members for their effort and commitment - it's been an honour and a pleasure to hold this position and I wish Christian Dellis all the best as the new chair over the next three years.

EPHYTO - GIANT STEPS

just about 60 years ago, in January 1960, one of the premier jazz saxophone artists of all time, John Coltrane, released a new album. Recorded in 1959, many reviewers noted that Coltrane took two giant steps that year; John Coltrane's Giant Steps subsequently became one of the all-time classic jazz albums, as did Miles Davis' Kind of Blue, in which John Coltrane played sax. One of the reasons for this was because he played flying clusters of notes that declared new possibilities for jazz improvisation. As we come to the close of 2019, we can say that the IPPC ePhyto Solution took some giant steps this year, and as much as Coltrane's Giant Steps opened up new possibilities for jazz improvisation, the ePhyto Solution's Giant Steps has opened up new possibilities for trade and collaboration.

The entire IPPC ePhyto Solution is now fully operational, with the Generic National System (GeNS) going live in July. Any IPPC Contracting Party that wishes to do so can come on board providing they meet the necessary criteria beforehand. These criteria are available on www.ePhytoexchange.org. We've held very successful ePhyto workshops which have brought on-board a number of new countries to the GeNS. Finally, toward the close of the year, the European Commission TRACES system linked in to the system bringing more than seventy countries on the system.



ePhyto opens doors for countries without a national system for electronic certification through the GeNS, meaning that phytosanitary certification can take place faster, certificates arrive quicker, safer and more secure than ever before. Safe and efficient trade in plants and plant products means positive opportunities appearing for people and in places where they did not exist before. And, when the GeNS gets updated, that is taken care of by the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) the technical designer and creator of the IPPC ePhyto Solution, no additional costs for GeNS users in maintenance.

**IAG CHAIR:
MS ALEJANDRA DANIELSON CASTILLO**

As we close 2019, let's take the time to celebrate the many successes of the ePhyto project. Case studies have continued with trade flows from the United States and Argentina as well as the Netherlands.

Collaboration between government agencies and industry to promote the ePhyto Hub and other electronic documentation platforms increased. Coming together in Geneva for the first time, we engaged in conversations that addressed the need to have interconnectivity amongst the various technologies being developed.

We are now active in various social media platforms, reaching thousands of people, spreading the ePhyto message, our brand and technology, and highlighting the need for this technology to succeed.

I am very proud of all we achieved in 2019 and I just know that 2020 will bring many more successes.





ePhyto creates chances to collaborate with other international organizations. The IPPC ePhyto Solution was designed by in such a way that any type of certificate can use the Hub, once an organization agrees on the coding. This collaboration, should it take place, in turn lowers the operational costs for keeping the Hub and GeNS up and running. The IPPC Secretariat and other international organizations (like the World Customs Organization, UNCEFACT and the International Maritime Organization, as examples), are reaching out to one another to explore new possibilities.

WORK(SHOPS) IN PROGRESS!

2019 was a busy year of ePhyto workshops, both national and regional levels. The objectives of the workshops were to be as interactive as possible and to promote a better understanding of the principles, benefits, and challenges associated with E-certification and the key tools and milestones to be followed in implement and manage ePhyto system.

AN AWARD WINNING SOLUTION!

In September 2019, the IPPC ePhyto Solution received a trade facilitation innovation award at the Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2019. The award was received for piloting and implementation of the Generic e-Phyto National System (GeNS) in Samoa and Sri Lanka and it also recognizes the work of the IPPC Secretariat, the ePhyto Steering Group and the UNICC in delivering the ePhyto hub, providing tools and opportunities to realize UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF) is the leading regional platform for the exchange of information, experiences and practice on trade facilitation. The APTFF has been organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and a growing number of partners since 2009, including UNCTAD, WCO and WTO. It is held biennially and attracts more than 250 participants from 30 countries.



There are more giant steps to come next year, the International Year of Plant Health, with ePhyto. In partnership with the UNICC, the IPPC Secretariat will soon have video training materials, which can be used as step-by-step guides for using the system. Plans are being made for regional workshops in the Near East, Africa and a Global Symposium. The UNICC are also working on a mobile application for the GeNS, and of course a number of additional IPPC Contracting Parties are expected to come on board next year.



WELCOMING THE EU TO THE IPPC EPHYTO SOLUTION:

The single European control IMSOC-TRACES system has started to test its connection with the ePhyto HUB. Thanks to recent changes done by IPPC and UNICC in the HUB structure, it is now possible for TRACES to act on behalf of the 28 European Union's Members through a single connection to ePhyto. Tests are ongoing with USA and Argentina and it is foreseen to be able to 'switch-on' TRACES to full production HUB operations by Q1/2020 and thus receive electronic phytosanitary certificates from all active members of the ePhyto community.

By Q2-Q3/2020, TRACES will be able to send such phytosanitary certificates to the ePhyto community.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH 2020

The work does not stop, the ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) continues to seek ways to make the system better, and there are still many hurdles to pass. A suitable sustainable funding solution needs to be produced, a number of developing countries require additional NPPO capacity to be able to use the system and hands-on training still needs to be conducted. Nevertheless, despite voices claiming it could not be done or reluctant to help make it happen, ePhyto is alive. We have taken some giant steps, but after working with the ESG for several years now, giant steps seem to be the only kind of steps that are taken.

Best wishes for the coming New Year, the International Year of Plant Health!

Your IPPC ePhyto Team

A COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE: JAMAICA TELLS US THE BENEFITS OF USING THE GENs

The implementation of GeNs in Jamaica is considered a tremendous accomplishment and the use of the system will help to provide:

- Greater transparency between issuing NPPO and receiving NPPO, hence increasing the trading confidence.
- GeNs offer certification notification several days prior to the arrival of shipments at the port, thus facilitating cost-saving and faster clearance of goods.
- Reduced incidences of fraudulent activities in the form of duplication and forgery.
- GeNs provide a platform for increasing ability to archive, sort, retrieved, produce history and statistics on Ephyto traded.

Jamaica became an active user on the IPPC GeNs on September 13, 2019 with the trading of over One Hundred and Ninety-Four (194) electronic Phytosanitary (ePhyto) Certificates with the United States of America and Argentina. Jamaica trading environment is quickly advancing into paperless. This is a mandate of the Government of Jamaica to drive trade facilitation to ensure doing business in Jamaica is more users friendly, real-time, more efficient and cost-saving.

The IPPC establishment of GeNs provides Jamaica with an opportunity to trade ePhyto with all major trading partners; in the absence of a national system.